



WHAT'S UP AT SHA'AR ZAHAV!

SYNAPLEX PURIM

Saturday March 3

Are you ready for a full day of Purim? Family-friendly Purim Carnival from 11:15 – 12 pm. Come in costume at 6 pm to hear the reading of the Megillah and eat hamentaschen — bring your own favorites if you wish.

DREAMS IN THE TALMUD

March 10 and 17, 1-4 pm

Ruth Haber is back with her acclaimed Talmud study class. Please sign up in advance.

MUSIC IN THE MISHKAN

2 Sundays at 4 pm

March 11-Tales from Terezin

String trios and quartets from Holocaust-era composers.

April 29-Prague and Madrid

Piano quartets by Dvorak and Turina

CONGREGATIONAL SEDER

Tuesday, April 3, 5 pm

Stay tuned for more info on this homemade seder.

SYNAPLEX RECOVERY WEEKEND

April 6 and 7

Connect with others during this Recovery Shabbat. Dinner and discussion at 6:30 pm, followed by an 8:15 pm service.

YOM HASHOAH

April 15, 6:30 pm

SYNAPLEX WEEKEND

Jeffrey A. Miller Scholar-in-Residence

April 20 and 21

Join teacher and storaheller Amichai Lau-Lavie on this fun and informative weekend. For more info go to www.storahelling.org.

You may have noticed that in the last issue we accidentally replaced a ץ with a צ in the masthead.

We're zo zorry.

A PESACH FOR RECOVERY: COMING OUT ABOUT ABUSE

By Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

In mid-March, I will be attending the third Jewish Women International conference on Domestic Violence. I have been asked to speak on a panel addressing domestic abuse in the LGBT community. This is both a meaningful and challenging opportunity for me and I hope to bring back new wisdom, sensitivity and resources.

Sexual abuse, incest, and domestic violence have long been personal concerns of mine, but up until now, I have not brought myself to speak of them in our Sha'ar Zahav community. I recognize that domestic violence and sexual abuse are difficult subjects to discuss. Many reading this have experienced abuse first-hand, either as adults involved in an intimate relationship or as children.

As a pastoral counselor, I have listened to your stories. As a survivor myself, I have felt tremendous empathy. And yet, in my public role as a spiritual leader, I have hesitated to come out, speak out and make this one of my causes. I want to change this; I want to begin now to raise awareness of the ways in which our communities, Jewish and Queer, have been particularly damaged by abuse, by stigma, and by silence.

Domestic violence is abuse that occurs within an intimate relationship. Statistics show us that it is most likely that the abuser will be male and the victim female. Yet we know men and boys as well as women and girls are battered

and are survivors. And both men and women are capable of committing acts of severe violence.

For far too long, Jews have denied that this is a Jewish problem. And many gays and lesbians believe that it is only a heterosexual issue. This is simply not so. Domestic violence, which is a pattern of control and behavior exercised by one person over another, occurs in same-gender relationships and Jewish families, no less than in the rest of society. Partner abuse occurs in as many as one-in-three relationships regardless of the sexual orientation or religious identity of the partners.

The abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, financial and/or homophobic/

biphobic/trans-phobic in nature and usually, though not always, occurs within a repeating pattern. Abuse can come in the form of the ongoing use of demeaning words like stupid, ugly, or crazy. It can be total access to and control over bank accounts and finances. It can be threats to injure children or pets. It can be monitoring and limiting friendships, going out, talking on the phone.

Domestic violence is not only always about having a bad temper or being out of control. It is about power and control — one person exerting power and control over an intimate partner. Domestic violence impacts on the entire family, injuring also the children who witness abuse by hearing it or seeing it.

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FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

Rabbi Camille Shira Angel
cont. from page 1

With Pesach just around the corner, I am mindful of the call to tell our story. Ours is a story of movement from oppression to liberation, of questioning, of speaking out, and of spiritual strength. As we proclaim at the seder, *b'chol dor vador hayav adam lirot et atzmo k'ilu hu yatza mimitzrayim*, "in every generation one must look upon himself/herself as if he/she personally had come out from Egypt," we cannot help but think of those who live enslaved in their homes, in relationships that break either their bodies or their spirits or both. It is up to us to say that

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this way of life is intolerable within the Jewish and Queer communities.

Either before you sit down at the seder this year, or even during your family and communal gatherings, I encourage you to read The National Declaration by Religious and Spiritual Leaders to Address Violence against Women —, which is printed below. At some point during the days of Pesach, sign on your support at www.faithtrustinstitute.org. Every person of faith may add his/her name as someone who stands against domestic violence. The declaration is distributed to battered women's programs

throughout the country. The unity of spiritual leaders and lay-persons can only strengthen our claim that all of us, created in God's image, deserve our love and our support.

Please feel free to forward this to your personal lists across faith lines; working together, may we eradicate sexual and domestic violence and transform our world to one of justice and freedom.

In time to come, I hope you will join me in this healing work.

Hag Sameach - may you enjoy a thoughtful and liberating Pesach.

NATIONAL DECLARATION BY RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS

To Address Violence Against Women

We proclaim with one voice as national spiritual and religious leaders that violence against women exists in all communities, including our own, and is morally, spiritually and universally intolerable.

We acknowledge that our sacred texts, traditions and values have too often been misused to perpetuate and condone abuse.

We commit ourselves to working toward the day when all women will be safe and abuse will be no more.

We draw upon our healing texts and practices to help make our families and societies whole.

Our religious and spiritual traditions compel us to work for justice and the eradication of violence against women.

We call upon people of all religious and spiritual traditions to join us.

Rabbi Camille Shira Angel
Co-signer, April 2006

CONGREGATION SHA'AR ZAHAV

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

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Congregation Sha'ar Zahav is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism, the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews, and the San Francisco Organizing Project

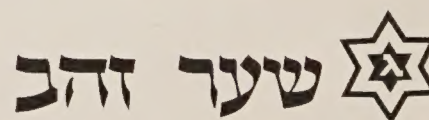
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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

CHILDREN AT SHA'AR ZAHAV

Ora Prochovnick



When Congregation Sha'ar Zahav was first established thirty years ago by the gay men who were our original founding members, the presence of young children in this congregation was one of the last things on their mind. Little did they imagine the *naches* (pride), *simcha* (joy) and wonder that our community would have the pleasure of experiencing in connection with the 150 children we are so thrilled to be able to count among our membership.

We love having babies, toddlers and young children join us in the sanctuary and contribute their occasional joyful sounds to the melodies of our service. However, it is also true that the exuberant activity and vocalization of young children does not always mesh well with the contemplative and meditative mood that some of our congregants seek in order to evoke a spiritual experience at services. This creates a tension as we strive to ensure that families with young children feel welcome and a part of our community, while at the same time we try to meet the needs of our adult members, both non-parents and parents alike, who do not wish to be disturbed while in prayer. Like many other congregations, Sha'ar Zahav has been grappling with the issue and trying to strike a balance so all the various members of our diverse community can feel embraced in their spiritual home.

A leadership task force, including members of the Children's Education Board, the Ritual Committee and others, has been meeting to try and address these competing concerns. A number of the proposals of this task force have already been implemented and others will be put into effect in the coming months.

Congregants should expect that certain services will have a more joyously unrestrained youthful presence. Chanukah and Purim immediately come to mind. Services which incorporate a life-cycle observance involving a family with young children and those following a community family dinner may also be attended by a greater number of babies and toddlers, and service leaders will plan accordingly. On the other hand, it is clear that there are specific parts of the service which require a quieter and more contemplative mood, including the Amidah, the drash, and the mourner's kaddish. When appropriate, service leaders will announce from the bima as we approach those more solemn times in the service.

Parents want to include their very young children in Shabbat services so that it will be a part of their early formative experience in order to nurture their connection to Judaism. However, compelling toddlers to remain in a room with behavior expectations which are beyond their

capabilities does not foster this goal. Instead, when children reach a point when they need to run and shout, or play more intensely than is manageable in the sanctuary, it is appropriate to relocate the kids to the childcare which is provided downstairs. In the future we have hopes of improving the quality of the childcare, and offering some Jewish content in the games and activities made available to the children. If childcare is not a workable solution, and instead the parent needs to leave the sanctuary and remain with his or her child, we will be resuming our past custom of piping the sound into the oneg room, so that the adults in the family can still listen to the service. We also encourage families with young kids to attend CSZ's new family night Shabbat service, "Friday Night Live!" held every month on the second Friday at 6 pm, a lively and celebratory children-integrated service for kids aged 0-6.

A handout is being prepared which will be made available for distribution at every service, which will explain the *minhag ha makom*, many of the customs that we adhere to at Sha'ar Zahav, including expectations regarding children in the sanctuary. Synagogue leadership who are on duty each Shabbat, the greeters and Va'ad announcer, will be on hand to gently but clearly remind people of our policies.

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VA'AD MEMBERS

Arthur Slepian,
Immediate Past President
Ron Edelman
Joss Eldridge
Manny Fishman
Paula Fleisher
Avi Goldberg
Marc Lipschutz
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Shelli Rawlings-Fein
Amy Scharf

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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It is also important to recognize that for some of us, the attendance of children at services enhances the spiritual experience. They are so incredibly present and in the moment - we as adults can learn so much from them that we once knew but have forgotten. The same exact childhood sound that is heard by one person in our congregation as a disturbing and jarring interruption will be heard by another as a beautiful contribution to the layered tones of a prayerful service. We recognize that in determining what is and is not acceptable child behavior at services, different adults, including parents, draw the line in different places. In light of this, we ask that individual congregants not directly intercede with the parents or child when they perceive a problem, but instead allow the greeter and Va'ad announcer to appropriately apply our congregational policies.

If anyone would like add your thoughts or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. I speak as the proud parent of erstwhile aisle-runners, my two teens who now only rarely leap over pews during their attendance at shabbat services, and who feel wholly connected to Sha'ar Zahav as their home. I am so honored to be connected with this congregation which embraces and nurtures our children and affirms the special and unique worth of every individual and family.

CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS

ANNUAL OFFICER AND VA'AD NOMINATIONS

CSZ will be holding elections for officers and Va'ad (Board) members at our annual congregational meeting on May 14. All officers, except for the president, are elected for a one-year term. Our president, Ora Prochovnick, is continuing to serve a two-year term. We will also be electing three at-large Va'ad members to serve three-year terms each.

The Nominating Committee prepares a slate of candidates for election at the annual meeting. We typically look for active members who have served as chairs of committees or programs, or have shown leadership skills and interest, and who share the congregation's commitment to Jewish education, diversity and service to the community.

We welcome suggestions from congregants for candidates to fill these positions. Members of the congregation may also self-nominate for a position by petition. The deadline to submit a written request to run by petition is **March 30**.

Please contact Nominating Committee co-chairs Rose Katz (415-647-3579, rose@katz.com) or Ray Bernstein (415-221-0192, rodenial@aol.com) or any of the committee members (Ron Edelman, Mike Klaiman and Debbie Levy) with your suggestions or questions.

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER VA'AD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Our cantor search committee, having conducted several outreach events, including a town hall meeting, a Beit Sefer

parents meeting, and a CSZ leadership meeting, completed a job description for the cantor position and submitted it to the Joint Cantorial Placement Commission of the American Conference of Cantors.

Implementation of a green initiative at CSZ to conserve on waste disposal was discussed. A committee was formed to deliberate various initiatives with the Building and Grounds Committee.

Rabbi's Assistant Greg Lawrence read a letter he'd written on behalf of Rabbi Angel to radio talk show host Pete Wilson and to one of the program's producer's in response to comments made on that show concerning the suitability of same-sex parenting relationships.

CSZ members James Carlson, Daniel Chesir, and Ron Lezell made presentations at the Union for Reform Judaism Pacific Central West Council Regional Biennial.

This year CSZ has been invited to host a visit from G'vanim, which brings Israelis to San Francisco and New York City to meet their professional counterparts. G'vanim expressed interest in an ongoing connection with CSZ.

CSZ treasurer Tony Harris has been setting up some systems to ease the burden of future CSZ treasurers.

An ad hoc group representing Membership, Leadership, Dues, Staff, and Keshet is discussing issues related to membership growth and retention. A suggestion was made that dues issues be put on the agenda for our 2007 Leadership Advance.

SAVE THE DATE!

TUESDAY, MARCH 20

7-8 PM

**FAITH WATKINS OF
FAMILY BUILDERS WILL
DISCUSS THE ADOPTION
PROCESS.**

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BIKKUR CHOLIM

If you or a friend who is a member of Sha'ar Zahav is ill in the hospital or at home, please notify the synagogue office.

PURIM, PESACH AND 'MIRACLES'

By Nina Wouk for the Ritual Committee

During the long winter's rest between biblically-ordained festivals, the two biggest Jewish holidays are Chanukah and Purim. They celebrate mythical or historical events that seem pretty tame compared to the miracles in the Pesach hagaddah - God's personal bringing of the tenth plague, the splitting of the sea, the mysterious "unveiling of the divine presence." Yet Chanukah and Purim serve as both a bridge to and a context for Pesach. They connect our experience of the world with the fantastic events of the Exodus story. The liturgy does this by grouping both historical and mythical events in the same category: *Nissim* - "Miracles."

On both Chanukah and Purim, the grace after meals and Amidah include the prayer *Al Ha-nissim*, "For the Miracles." Yet the prayer mentions no events that challenge the laws of nature. The Chanukah version gives thanks for the military victory of the weak over the strong, the few over the many, the righteous over the arrogant; and for the cleansing and rededication of the Temple. There is no reference to any long-burning oil. On Purim, the *nissim* are the frustration of Haman's design and his being hanged on his own gallows. The Book of Esther adds that these came about through political courage, intelligence, unity and luck, which gained for the Jews of Persia the right to defend themselves against a genocidal mob.

The word "miracle" comes from the Latin "*miraculum*," something wondered at. Due to its use by medieval Christians, the word came to mean any event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers and is ascribed to a supernatural cause. However, traditional rabbinic Judaism treats claims of such events with caution. The Talmud consigns to a special creation, on the eve of the first Sabbath at twilight, all the items mentioned in the Torah text that contradict the laws of nature. Similarly, claims that the messiah had come were to be treated with skepticism; "If you are planting a tree and you hear that the messiah has come," we are advised, "finish planting it." The next to last *bracha* of every Amidah mentions "your

miracles that are every day with us," not events outside nature, but everything that points to God's presence in the world. *Al Ha-nissim*, coming from the same era, is equally down-to-earth, using "miracle" in its original sense: an event that compels wonder, an unlikely victory or escape.

nissim, miracles, are our own hard-won victories

The Hebrew "*nissim*" includes and expands on that meaning. "*Nissim*" is the plural of "*nes*," which means literally "*banner*." A banner serves as a sign to show members of a wide-spread army where their leader is. This need must have been overwhelming for a pre-modern people scattered all over the world, divided from both their ancestral land and each other. It was not only a shared history that connected them, nor even a shared code of law, but also a shared awareness, a carefully-cultivated ability to find God's presence in their lives.

The rabbis who founded post-Temple Judaism taught us not to wait for extraordinary events to feel cared for and protected. Life, then as now, was too painful and precarious to allow a positive attitude to hinge on singular events, such as those of the Exodus.

In celebrating Chanukah and Purim, we celebrate events that echo our own hard-won victories, our own narrow escapes from danger, the rewards of our own faithfulness and efforts. By calling these "*nissim*," we learn to recognize God's help in our own times, when it comes unheralded by events that challenge nature.

When the year leads at last to Pesach, we are ready to recognize in its entertaining but unlikely legends our ancient ancestors' awareness of God's compassionate protection. Thus we become ready, as the hagaddah says, to thank, praise and glorify, the Power that has ever sustained us in our struggles for survival and freedom.



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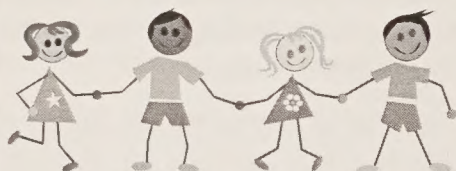
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Pinat Yeladim U'mishpachah

Children and Family Corner



FAMILY CALENDAR

To find out more about these programs go to the Sha'ar Zahav website at www.shaarzahav.org/children-families.

BABY CHAVURAH

Sunday, March 18 10:30 am

Sunday, April 22 10:30 am

Meets at Duboce Park (Noe @ Duboce)

Bad weather: Meet at CSZ at 4 pm

An opportunity for the under 2 set to get together and bond with their future bnei mitzvah class while their parents share tips and trials.

TOT SHABBAT

Saturday, March 17 10:30 am

Saturday, April 21 10:30 am

For families with children ages 2 to 5. Celebrate Shabbat through music, art, prayer and fun! For more information contact Mary Jane Eisenberg at maryjane@shaarzahav.org.

"FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE!"

Friday, March 9 6 pm

Friday, April 13 6 pm

Bring yourselves and your favorite grown-ups and come celebrate Shabbat with us. Monthly Family Shabbat Service designed for children 0 – 6 years, meets every second Friday of each month.

FAMILY KABBALAT SHABBAT

Friday, March 16 6:30 pm

Friday, April 20 6:30 pm

Potluck at 6:30 pm; Service follows.

Meet, eat, sing and celebrate Shabbat with CSZ families, then stay for Friday night services. All ages are welcome. Dinner is vegetarian potluck. Bring a dish to share. No RSVP is required.

NEW EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES THIS SPRING

By Mary Jane Eisenberg, Director of Children's and Family Education

We have a couple of new and exciting events and opportunities this spring at Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer.

The first of these is an initiative to expand our Design Teams. Each year, a Design Team created of parents and non-parents learns material relevant to the Beit Sefer curricular unit and then teaches one of our classes, concluding with a class and family Shabbaton. We are going to expand from one Design Team a year to three in order to promote intergenerational learning. We also plan to make it easier for these teams to do their work. This spring, we will provide training to future Design Team Leaders (please contact me if you are interested). We also are putting together a Design Team Manual so that we can pass down this opportunity to future generations of Design Teams here at CSZ.

Second, this March will see our first Community Learning Havdallah. The idea behind this event is to launch each new Beit Sefer curriculum unit with a community celebratory havdallah, pot-luck and art experience. At the March 10 havdallah, led by Andrew Ramer and Educator

Mary Jane Eisenberg, we will learn a new melody/verse for the havdallah ceremony, one which will invoke Serakh, a little known woman whose role is very similar to Elijah's. We will also create small Books of Serakh to include on our seder tables. Please join us!

Our third new initiative this spring is taking place on March 22nd from 6:30 – 8:30. We invite adults to learn with Rabbi Camille Shira Angel and Educator Mary Jane Eisenberg about *how to talk about the "inescapable realities of life" with our children*. There are things that happen for no discernable reason – earthquakes, death from a random accident of time or place, incurable illness. When our children see a world where tragic and undeserved fates befall people at random, how do we talk about it with them? Come with your family's questions. This is a great opportunity to delve into a deep and potent topic with your CSZ community.

There is a lot going on this spring. We hope you will take advantage of our new events and we look forward to seeing you on one of next year's Design Teams.

BEIT SEFER DATES TO REMEMBER

March 3rd - Purim Carnival

11:15 – 12 @ CSZ

Join our Beit Sefer students for our homegrown Purim carnival, featuring booths created by Beit Sefer students, recycled prizes, and hamantaschen. Come in costume or play in our dress-up box but don't miss this entertaining family fun for all.

NEW

**March 10 – Community Havdallah
Potluck Teach-In at CSZ**

from 5:30 – 8 pm

Begin our new Beit Sefer unit – Voices of Israel/Jewish Expressions – with friends. Come and learn about Serakh, learn a new melody/verse for our havdallah ceremony and begin a new tradition of creating small Books of Serakh to include on our seder tables.

The Fifth Question

**March 22 - 6:30- 8:30 pm Talking
About Inescapable Realities of Life
with our Children**

At this event, adults will have an opportunity to learn with Rabbi Camille Shira Angel and Educator Mary Jane Eisenberg about how to talk about the "inescapable realities of life" with our children.

**March 24 – Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer
led service 10 – 12 noon**

**March 24 (12:30 – 3 pm) and
25th (2:30 – 5 pm)**

Pesach Prep Days

Beit Sefer Families contribute to the synagogue by cleaning, organizing, and generally making ourselves useful. Please sign up with Jessica Alexandra at max.120199@att.net.

DOLLS FOR DARFUR – A CHILD TAKES ACTION

I, Naomi Zingman-Daniels, a 12-year-old congregant, sit and smile as I log one more donation into my spreadsheet. The spreadsheet logs all the donations I've received for Dolls for Darfur, a project I founded late last year. So far it's still really small, and I only have four or five rows filled out. But it's getting somewhere – and I'm making a difference, even though it is a small one. But, with your help, it could be a bigger difference.

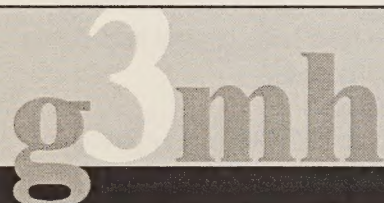
I founded Dolls for Darfur after some research. I was sickened by the facts I found: almost 500,000 people have been massacred in Darfur, Sudan. This tragedy has been named the worst genocide since the Rwandan genocide of 1994, it's been going on for years, and millions are displaced and dependent on international aid. Also, although there was a treaty signed, the fighting is ongoing. So, after finding out this and more, I decided something had to be done. I thought for a while and came up with my project.

What I do is I ask people to make decorated paper dolls, no bigger than six inches, and give them to me. When I receive enough, I will display them in a public place such as a library. The dolls will symbolize all those killed. I have found that although many people would like to make a doll, they are simply too busy. In this case, I simply ask if they could donate a dollar or if they could just tell some friends. 100% of all donations go to helping stop the genocide. I know you all are busy, but anything you can do is appreciated.

As the weather gets better, I plan to have more little fundraisers. Hopefully, you can come and donate something or maybe you could help out. I have a website, <http://dolls-for-darfur.net>, where everything you can do and complete facts about the genocide are listed. I hope you will help, and I thank you on behalf of all the victims of this genocide.



*Reuben "I'm a Tree" Zellman
at Tu B'shvat.*



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ADULT EDUCATION DONATION

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in memory of Ammiel Prochovnick.

Jeanette Nichols

in memory of Phyllis Minzter.

Lonnie Weiss

in celebration of the joy of seeing

Alan Foss again.

in memory of Ammiel Prochovnick.

ADULT EDUCATION FUND

Steven Elman & Tom Holt

in memory of Betty Edelman.

in memory of Ammiel Prochovnick.

AIDS FUND DONATION

Neil Hart

in memory of Joel Lauden.

in memory of Tim Elliot.

BIKKUR CHOLIM FUND

Andrew & Michelle Williamson

in memory of Jerry Davis.

in memory of Leon Meteyer.

BUILDING FUND

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in memory of Gil Cohen.

CHAI CAMPAIGN

Paul Cohen & Bob Gutterman.

Avraham Giannini.

Richard Meyerson

in honor of the sale of
Alex Ingersoll's home.

Andrew Schwartz & John Mark Eggerton.

Susan Tubbesing & Sarah Nathe.

CHESIR-STEIN MUSIC FUND

Marianne Balin & Prudence Carter

in memory of Ammiel Prochovnick.

in memory of Betty Edelman.

in memory of Shelma Angel.

Pieter de Haan & Ruth Rainero

in memory of Belle Rainer.

Mary Heitman and the family of

June Raim Heitman

in honor of Paul Cohen, for his support
and assistance at the time of June's
death and for the beautiful graveside
funeral service he conducted.

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND

Joan Lefkowitz & Stacey Shuster

in appreciation of the CSZ office staff for
helping with Mara's bat mitzvah.

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in gratitude of all who helped and
supported her and Daniel throughout
Daniel's bar mitzvah.

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in memory of Dolores Hulsey.

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Allen Harris.

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in memory of Ellen Albin.

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in memory of Hans Meyer MD.

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Zahav, for creating a beautiful place
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in honor of her uncles, Bill and Chris.

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in honor of Rabbi Angel, both our spiritual
guide in Israel and at home.

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in memory of her mother,

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in memory of Ammiel Prochovnick.

in honor of the welcoming of

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Alison Jacoby & Vanessa Teplin.

Batya Kalis

in memory of Ammiel Prochovnick.

in memory of Betty Edelman.

in memory of Dolores Hulsey.

Joan Lefkowitz & Stacey Shuster

in appreciation of Ora Prochovnick as
president of the congregation and Mara's
bat mitzvah mentor.

Ron Lezell

in memory of Betty Edelman.

in honor of the 20th anniversary of
Stacey Shuster and Joan Lefkowitz.

in memory of Ammiel Prochovnick.

Barbara & Ken Lotney

in honor of Karlyn Lotney's friends,
who have been of great help during
her illnesses.

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in honor of Sophie's bat mitzvah.

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in honor of Elijah Lezell-Jatovsky.

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in honor of Elijah Lezell's bar mitzvah.

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in honor of the occasion of Sidney Maely Goldfader-Duffy's birth.

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in honor of Neil Hart's birthday.

Batya Kalis.

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in appreciation of Rabbi Angel.

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in memory of Shelma Angel.

Mark Mackler & Wendell Choo

in memory of Shelma Angel.

Judy Macks.

Nancy Meyer & Daniel Meyer O'Keeffe

in honor of Rabbi Angel, Daniel Chesir and Andrew Ramer for their support before and after Daniel's bar mitzvah.

Richard Meyerson

in memory of Shelma Angel.

Lydia Radovich Zinn

in honor of Joss Eldredge.

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in memory of Max S. Tat, Beatrice Leben, Rose Irene Tat, Albert K. Sherwin, and Irene Sherwin.

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in memory of Shelma Angel.

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in memory of Shelma Angel.

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in memory of his mother, Betty Edelman.

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in honor of Don "Dad" Fischer.

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in honor of Ora Prochovnick's presidency.

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in memory of Phillip and Sherman Kalis.

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Richard Meyerson with best wishes and speedy recovery for Laura Lowe, Irene Ogus, and Char O'Neill.

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29/30

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JANUARY

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26/27

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NEW MEMBERS

Welcome!

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Erik Henriques
Julie and Anshel Mamet (her 1 year old)
Arthur Meirson
Leslie Miessner
Matthew Rostoker
Richard Shapiro
Jovius Ulrey
David Zinn

NACHES

Lisa Inman and Alisa Gilden on the birth of their daughter, Shaya Inman Gilden, who was born on January 12, 2007.

Mara Shuster-Lefkowitz on the occasion of her becoming a bat mitzvah on December 23, 2006.

Daniel Meyer-O'Keeffe on the occasion of his becoming a bar mitzvah on December 30, 2006.

Sophie Macks on the occasion of her becoming a bat mitzvah on January 13, 2007.

Jonathan Williamson on the occasion of his becoming a bar mitzvah on January 20, 2007.

Lucy Bernholz on having her blog named as one of the three best blogs in philanthropy: www.philanthropy.blogspot.com.

Andrew Ramer, whose midrash can be found in the recently published anthology *Charmed Lives: Gay Spirit in Storytelling*

Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, who has been become the Senior Editor of the premier "New Jewish Culture" magazine, **Zeek!**

Joss Eldredge and Alan Foss for doing a magnificent job volunteering Sunday, January 28th's Music in the Mishkan. And of course, a huge Yishar Koach to **Randy Weiss** for his very vibrant violin performance.

Richard Sinkoff, for his promotion to Port Environmental Manager by the Port of Oakland in October, and for his completion of a Juris Doctor degree at Golden Gate University School of Law.

Allan Berenstein for becoming the recipient of this year's prestigious FAMMY award. See the profile of Allan on page 14 of this newsletter.

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ORGANIZING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

By Sue Fishkoff

This article is an excerpt from a story filed with JTA — The Global News Service of the Jewish People. For in-depth coverage of the latest developments affecting Jews all over the world, click: www.jta.org

LOS GATOS, Calif. (JTA) — Three state Assembly members and a lone county supervisor were no match for 500 Jews demanding more money for health care.

It was hardly a fair fight. But that's how it usually goes at such events, whispered Simon Greer, president of Jewish FundS for Justice, which had bused in more than 200 participants for the meeting from its national conference, "Holy Congregations, Just Communities," in nearby Santa Clara.

It's not surprising to see Jews heavily represented among activists for health care, or any other social, political or environmental cause.

But these people Monday night were doing it as congregations, following a model of congregation-based community organizing put forward by Jewish FundS for Justice five years ago.

Participants from around the country said they are helping to transform their congregations into more caring, connected communities.

On the social action front, they are moving beyond once-a-year "mitzvah days" to become effective agents for social change in housing, education, crime prevention and health care. They are helping to push through laws and policies at local and state levels that they never could have alone.

"Hundreds of thousands of people have access to health care because of this work," Greer said.

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav in San Francisco held 150 one-to-one meetings over the course of a year before joining the San Francisco Organizing Project, an interfaith network, to work for health-care reform.

"There was a lot of hesitancy in the synagogue," congregant Susan Lubeck said. "The idea of being the only Jews in a Christian context was unnerving."

It turns out that the churches had been seeking a way to draw synagogues into their social justice work, said Erika Katske, associate director of the San Francisco Organizing Project, just at the time that synagogues nationwide were becoming more interested.

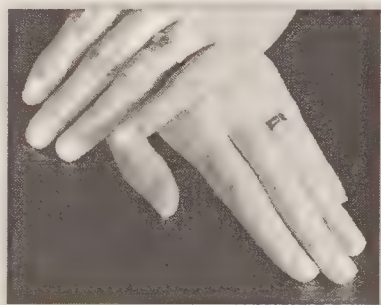
Last June, Sha'ar Zahav hosted its first meeting with city officials to push for health-care reform. Rabbi Camille Angel watched as her congregants stood up and, one by one, told their stories: One had AIDS, another couldn't afford medical insurance.

The politicians voted unanimously, and San Francisco became one of the first cities to pledge universal health-care coverage.

That was terrific, Angel said, but what the process did for her congregation was just as important.

"I saw my congregants become leaders," the rabbi said. "It was one of the most religious moments I'd ever seen in my sanctuary."

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TOUCHING LIVES: A PROFILE OF ALLAN BERENSTEIN

By Batya Kalis

On March 24, Allan Berenstein will receive a FAMMY Award from the Jewish Family and Children's Services Agency for his work in tikkun olam. Allan has been a member of CSZ since 1979, but some members who have joined in recent years do not know who he is, because he works quietly and, for the most part, "behind the scenes." But over the years, his contributions to our communities—CSZ, LGBT, Jewish, and the community at large—have been enormous. Allan believes that each of us has an ability in some area and when you know what yours is, you should maximize what you can do with it. His term for what he does is "being with people in the moment," particularly during difficult times in their lives. And indeed, his very presence provides hope and encouragement to those he encounters.

At CSZ, when Mark Feldman (z/l) announced to the Va'ad that he had AIDS, it was the beginning of that nightmare to our community, and Allan immediately joined the "Phooey on AIDS" fund-raising effort before anything was known about the origin of the illness, let alone what might possibly be developed to treat it. "It was at this point," said Allan, "that I felt I had to roll up my sleeves and jump into the trenches." He realized that AIDS happened to "ordinary people like me" and I had to do something.

"Doing something" involved more than preparing and taking meals to those who were ill, driving them to doctors' appointments, visiting with them when they were in the hospital and "being there" when they were dying. It also meant "being there" with friends and families of those who were ill.

CSZ member Allen Harris (z/l) was a nurse at Kaiser on the AIDS floor and suggested that services for the AIDS patients there did not have the social support that those at San Francisco General did. It was then that Allan started and developed the Kaiser Brunch program. He and CSZ volunteers ran this monthly social program for many years until lengthy hospitalizations

dwindled. It included not only brunch for the patients, their families or other visitors, and staff, but visits to those patients unable to come to the brunch, live music organized by Randy Weiss, and Allan's presence and organizing skills.

Many people, after a stint of volunteering, burn out. Allan, however, just increased his efforts. In 1990, after fully retiring from the corporate world, Allan became a daytime volunteer for Project Open Hand. In addition, he volunteered at Davies Hospital where there was a more diverse patient population on the AIDS service. It was the first time he had regular contact with actively dying people, and for years afterwards some of the families continued some contact with him.

Along with these projects, Allan has been involved with Family Link, a house in the Castro that provides a temporary residence for families and friends of hospitalized patients, and with Coming Home Hospice, where Allan's support for families played a significant role in reconciliation and their coming to terms with the dying process.

He has long been involved with a house near the synagogue (and his own residence) for previously homeless people with AIDS. Allan and others in the neighborhood helped raise seed money for that first house; it has been so successful that an AIDS organization bought and continues to support that house, and the neighborhood group was able to open a second house next door.

Allan's service is by no means confined to the ill and dying. He has been and continues to "be there" for those he



encounters who are in a difficult period of their lives. These include many in the CSZ community as well as in other parts of the city. At times, he is behind the scenes organizing other support for these people and often those who benefit have no knowledge of his role.

Meanwhile, he is in close contact with his family, including his two sons and their families (his grandchildren) and his brothers and their families. Despite all he continues to do, when you are with him it is as if he has all the time in the world just for you. He typifies the meaning of the word "mensch" and the award from Jewish Family and Children's Service is well deserved, as is the love and admiration of all who are fortunate enough to know him.

If you or anyone you know would like to join CSZ and JFCS in honoring Allan at the JFCS FAMMY Awards gala on March 24, you may call 415-449-1236 to receive an invitation or purchase a ticket. If you would like to learn more about JFCS's services — particularly their CSZ outreach program, please visit their website www.jfcs.org.

COMFORTING THE MOURNER

Reprinted with permission from the Jewish Tool Kit [May 2003].

You probably did not wake up today eager to talk about death and mourning. The Jewish Tool Kit understands how you feel. Few of us like to talk about this topic, even though we all have to deal with it eventually. But there is great wisdom and comfort in the Jewish approach to death and mourning, which is guided by two principles: *kibud ha-met*, honoring the deceased, and *nichum avelim*, comforting the mourners. Better to learn a little more about them now, so that when a death occurs we can draw strength from the tradition or offer it to others.

From the moment of death until burial, we provide assistance to the bereaved, but we do not attempt to comfort him. The Mishna teaches "do not console your friend while his dead lie before him," recognizing that in the chaotic state immediately after the death of a loved one, a person is not in a frame of mind to be consoled, but should simply be allowed to express grief.

During this time, the focus is on maintaining the honor and dignity of

the deceased, which is accomplished in three main ways. First, a body is never left alone, but is watched over day and night until burial. Second is a process called *tahara*, where the body is ritually washed. Finally, burial takes place as quickly as possible, since it is considered disrespectful of the deceased to leave his body unburied.

Immediately after burial the emphasis shifts to comforting the mourner. Traditionally, during an intense seven day period called *shiva* (which means "seven"), a mourner remains inside, sits low to the ground, wears slippers instead of leather shoes, and abstains from pleasurable activities such as sexual relations, bathing and grooming (beyond basic hygiene), wearing new clothes, or studying torah.

Visitors provide comfort to the mourner during this period. One enters a house of mourning in silence and does not greet the mourner, but rather sits by her side, until she is ready to speak. Idle chit-chat or attempts to distract the mourner from

his loss are not the Jewish way. Rather, it is appropriate and encouraged to talk about the deceased, to reminisce about his life and lament his death, always following the mourner's lead. These same guidelines apply even if mourners choose to have a single memorial or prayer service instead of a full seven day *shiva*.

Now, The Jewish Tool Kit does not want to get all preachy, but she has to stress that it is always fitting to attend a funeral, *shiva*, or memorial service for a member of your community, regardless of your relationship to the deceased or to the mourner. Your mere presence provides solace even if you do not say a word. Comforting the bereaved is a *mitzvah* that we learn directly from God, who visited Isaac upon the death of his father, Abraham. It is viewed not only as a sacred communal obligation, but as one of the greatest acts of *chesed* (lovingkindness) that you can do for another.

Comments about the Jewish Tool Kit can be sent to JewishToolKit@attglobal.net.



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RSVP: csz30@shaarzahav.org

CONDOLENCES

Sharon Dulberg, Ilana Drummond, and Micha Drummond-Dulberg, on the death of Sharon's close family friend, Helen Wiley

Sara Felder Noily, Dev Felder Noily, and Jesse Felder Noily, on the death of Sara's mother, Frances Felder

Kelly Cytron, on the death of her uncle, William Hoffman

Raul Garcia-Gonzalez, on the death of his mother-in-law, Elvia Medina

Marc Lipschutz, on the death of his aunt, Frances Barnholtz

Steve Elman and Thomas Holt on the death of their friend, David Poss

Richard Allman, on the death of his father-in-law, Giuseppe Battaglia

Martin Tannenbaum, on the death of his family friend, Katherine Blunk

Former CSZ President **Leila Raim**, on the death of her sister, June Raim Heitman

Jeffrey Lilly, on the death of his mother, Dolores Hulsey

Amy Schustack, on the death of her mother, Bernice Schustack

Hilary Zaid and Lauren Augusta, on the death of their friend, Ruth Saphir Hardin

YAHREZEITS

MARCH

- 4 Jamie Rosen
- 7 Isabel Fishman
- 7 Paul Nemrow
- 16 Theodore Mendonca
- 20 Robert Coffman
- 26 Michael Lipson
- 28 Neill Rosen
- 31 Marvin Steele

APRIL

- 1 Adam Harris
- 2 Ronald Gertz
- 3 Abraham Cohen
- 6 Dennis Mitchell
- 21 Robert Sterman
- 23 Michael Randall
- 24 Norma Faini-Pick

WE REMEMBER THEM

At the rising of the sun and
at its going down
We remember them.

At the blowing of the wind and
the chill of winter
We remember them.

At the opening of the buds and
in the rebirth of spring
We remember them.

At the blueness of the skies and
in the warmth of summer
We remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and
in the beauty of autumn
We remember them.

At the beginning of the year and
when it ends
We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live;
for they are now a part of us,
as we remember them.

Please Be in Touch With Me

I am eager to be in touch
with all members of
the CSZ family
whenever there are
occasions of joy or sadness
in your lives.

Where there is a death
in the family, please call
me as soon as possible.

We very much want to
be there with you
at a time of grief.

*Rabbi Camille
Shira Angel*

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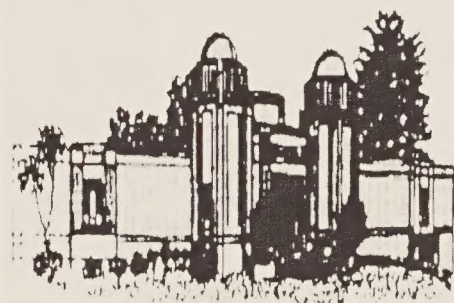
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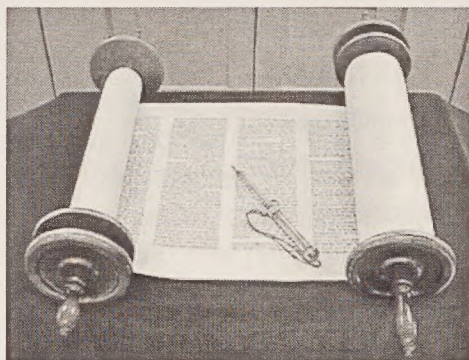
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CONGREGATION SHA'AR ZAHAV

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Rabbi Camille Shira Angel

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 13 Nisan 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	2 Erev Pesach First Seder	3 First Day Pesach 5:00 pm Home Made Congregational Pesach Seder	4 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	5 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	6 Synaplex Shabbat 6:30 pm Recovery Shabbat Dinner and Discussion 8:15 pm Shabbat Service	7 9:00 am Torah Study w/Ruth Haber 10:00 am Shabbat Service
8 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	9 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	10 Eighth Day Pesach Office closed 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	11 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	12 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	13 6:00 pm Family Shabbat Service 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	14 9:00 am Torah Study 10:00 am Shabbat Service
15 10:30 am Baby Chavurah at Duboce Park 6:30 pm Yom Hashoah Service at Ma'ariv	16 Yom Hashoah 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	17 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	18 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	19 Rosh Chodesh Iyar 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	20 Synaplex Shabbat Scholar-in-Residence Weekend 6:30 pm Family Potluck 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	21 9:00 am Torah Study 10:00 am Shabbat Service 10:30 am Tot Shabbat
22 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	23 Yom Hazikaron 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	24 Yom Ha'Atzmaut 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	25 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	26 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	27 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	28 9:00 am Torah Study 10:00 am Shabbat Service
29 4:00 pm Music in the Mishkan 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	30 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	1 1 Iyyar	2 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	3 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	4 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service	5 6:30 pm Ma'ariv Service

ADAR/NISAN 5767

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday